

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY
2 April 2006

HAMNET is the Official Emergency Communications network of the South African Radio League that provides emergency communication to local, regional and national authorities, when requested to do so.

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IN THE BULLETIN TODAY:-

BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY HOLIDAYS AND LONG WEEK-ENDS JAMLINE UPDATE INCIDENT BOOKLET TOO CLOSE FOR CONFORT?

HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

KZN Sunday morning at 07H00 on their local VHF repeaters with a relay on 7.060 and/or 3.650MHz. KZN also have a Wednesday evening call-up and meeting on their 2M repeater system with the introduction of an 80M relay on 3.650MHz.

The National Bulletin is read at 12H00 CAT on 7,070MHz. We have had to go back to the old frequency as we are interfering with late bulletins on 7:062MHz. Please watch this space!

The Gauteng North bulletin will probably also change due to the appointment of a new Provincial Director. We await further instructions.

Gauteng South has a weekly Indaba on 145.6125 with the possibility of a relay on 3.760MHz in the 80M band for outlying listeners.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Hamnet Western Cape Province meets on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 145:700MHz, relayed on 3,674MHz.

Please note, this bulletin is available for download from the web site of the SARL under the heading "HAMNET". Please access this section of the website as it contains a host of relative information relating to HAMNET and is designed to assist members as far as possible with information.

The bulletin is also distributed to all Provincial Directors for reading on their local repeaters when communication in the 40M band is affected by poor conditions.

The HAMNET section of the SARL website is open to all amateur radio operators. We decided on this for two reasons, to encourage non League members to join the League and also to encourage newly licensed amateurs to consider joining HAMNET.

Please also note that HAMNET is a voluntary, non profit group of amateurs who use their communication skills to assist and help others in distress during and after disasters.

HOLIDAYS AND LONG WEEKENDS

The first school term came to an end on the 30th and 31st of March, depending in which province you reside. Coastal schools re-open on the 10th of April, just prior to the Ester Weekend and all inland schools reopen on the 18th of April, immediately after the Easter Weekend.

We do not anticipate a vast amount of traffic over the period 31 March to 2 April but we should be on standby to handle some traffic problems.

The main thrust of traffic will obviously be over the Easter Weekend and Thursday the 13th of April will be one of those days. As usual, it will be appreciated if we could monitor our preferred emergency frequencies around the country on that specific day as well as over the weekend itself.

With inland schools reopening on the 18th of April, we anticipate that there will be a heavy traffic load on the all roads on Monday the 17th.

I will deal with this more fully later in the bulletin, but we do now have an arrangement with JAMLINE (Rob Byrne) for traffic reports and that HAMNET will be getting credit for traffic reports phoned in.

Some HAMNET operators are already making use of ECHOLINK to maintain good contact with other operators in passing information. This means of communication is going to be developed at a later stage but at present it is in an experimental stage. We also realise that not too many operators have ECHOLINK facilities, however it is useful.

The other “long weekend” we should be looking at is the period from 26 April to 1 May. There is a possibility that many people will also make use of the period to take break.

Again, we should be prepared to do some monitoring on the Wednesday prior to the “weekend” and on Monday which is also a public holiday.

JAMLINE UPDATE

As mentioned earlier, an arrangement now exists with us and JAMLINE. Rob has agreed to give limited credit to information passed on to him by HAMNET operators.

Due to time limitations and to avoid transgression of the “free advertising” code, Rob indicated that any report sent to him will be indicated as follows:- quote HAMNET, the emergency communication network, report an accident in such & such a place end quote. He will then elaborate on the accident scene or give a full report on the data phoned in or sent in by us.

Rob explained that he is limited to time on air and cannot really spend too much time elaborating on who HAMNET are etc. I am happy with this and at least HAMNET is getting a mention on air.

Again, let's be very specific regarding incidents, accidents and reports phoned in to Rob. Accuracy is of the utmost importance. Be aware of accurate positioning of accidents when in a built up area and when on the open road, be specific of landmarks, distances from last off-ramp or kilometre readings etc.

Please enter this number permanently into your cell phone for ease of reference, 084JAMLINE or 084 526 5463.

All reports are aired on Radio and Television and I look forward to many HAMNET reports on air in future!

Again, our thanks to Rob Byrne, who runs the JAMLINE Traffic Clearing House!

INCIDENT BOOKLET

An excellent suggestion from Martin Harper ZS6MSG which should not go unheeded!

How often do we sit at our radios and pass on data regarding an incident any incident. Have you kept notes about this episode? Do you have a reference book (apart from maybe some short notes in your log book) to go back to should you be questioned on a report you sent through?

We all keep logs during cycle races, rallies etc. when something untoward is received and acted on.

Do you have an "incident" book on your desk? No! Then consider getting one especially now that we are going to taking information and passing it on to JAMLINE and for that matter, regarding any incident where a HAMNET member is involved.

Too often one relies on memory which is often short lived. This is an excellent idea from Martin and something we should all seriously look into. Thanks Martin. A very good idea and something all HAMNET members should consider as a standard on any shack desk!

TOO CLOSE FOR CONFORT?

During the past 3 months, the eastern part of Africa, or the rift valley as it is known, has had 2 earthquakes, one measuring more than 5 points on the Richter scale.

So close in fact, that even people in Durban felt the quake. This made me look further and I accessed the Relief Website to see what has been happening around the world during the past few months, and it was quite horrifying to say the least. Obviously too many "incidents" to mention but here are a few that made the headlines!

In Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo experienced a tornado in March. However the list of current complex and natural disasters is as long as my arm with continuing drought in Kenya and the Horn of Africa.

In Asia, it is not much different. Indonesia has had earthquakes, landslides (due to deforestation) and flooding. Bangladesh had a tornado and in Kyrgyzstan heavy snowfalls caused havoc with transportation in March.

South America saw flooding in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia with complex emergencies in Colombia and Haiti.

Finally, lets not forget Cyclone Larry which lashed the north eastern coastline of Australia earlier this month. By all accounts, this cyclone was as powerful as Katrina which caused havoc in America some time back.

Whilst not wanting to stir too much, in an article published during September last year, it was noted that even Malaria could become an international problem over the next few years.

By the year 2050 the area of the earth affected by malarial mosquitoes could increase from 45 to 60 per cent extending even to London in the U.K.

This again is attributable to the global warming or greenhouse affect so much is talked about lately. So, apart from Visa s and other issues needed when travelling overseas, even anti malarial mosquito repellent may be needed!

Final note! The Hamnet simulated contest takes place on Sunday the 9th of April. Please note change in dates. The information is available on the website of the SARL or in the Blue Book.

The times are from 12H UTC to 14H UTC or 2 - 4pm local time.

FINAL COMMENT

Due to pressure of work and being a bit isolated in Heidelberg, Chris, ZS6VB, has decided to stand down as Provincial Director for Gauteng South. I personally wish to thank Chris for his hard work and input, not for the last few months but also over the years as an active Hamnet member.

Chris will continue to be available for emergency communication in the future.

The Vacancy is not going to be advertised in the normal way. This time around I will approach all the Clubs who form part of the area known as Gauteng South and through discussion and meetings, the candidate who is acceptable to all, will be appointed to fill this vacancy by the Clubs concerned. I am doing it this way to try and prevent fragmentation of this area and to make it free and democratic.

Also my congratulations to Chris Gryffenberg, ZS6COG for his effort in getting a HAMNET presence in the Springs Disaster Management Operational room and to Pierre ZS1HF with a successful training weekend up in the Cederberg area over the last weekend.

The objective of this training session was to test, implement and go through the new Training Modules.

Finally, Carel Oberholzer, ZS3OBE and his team had a preliminary committee meeting to set objectives for the Northern Cape area.

That is all for today. Comments and suggestions to: zs6buu@uskonet.com

More information available on www.sarl.org.za then click on HAMNET in the left hand column for all the details you may need. Bulletin ends.